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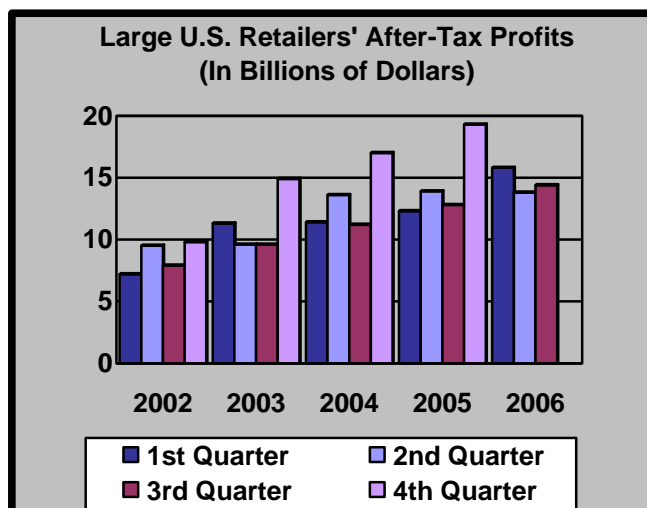
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THIRD QUARTER 2006 ADVANCE DATA FROM THE QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT LARGE U.S. RETAIL TRADE CORPORATIONS



After-tax profits of U.S. retail corporations with assets of \$50 million and over totaled \$14.4 billion in the third quarter 2006, up \$0.7 (± 0.1) billion from the \$13.8 billion of the preceding quarter, and up \$1.6 (± 0.1) billion from the \$12.8 billion of the same quarter a year ago, the U.S. Census Bureau reported. Sales in the third quarter 2006, at \$484.1 billion, were not statistically different from the \$482.6 billion of last quarter, and up \$38.0 (± 5.1) billion or 8.5 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) from the \$446.1 billion of the third quarter of 2005. These data are not adjusted for seasonality.

After-tax profits for these corporations averaged 3.0 cents per dollar of sales for the third quarter of 2006, up 0.1 cent from the 2.9 cents of the preceding quarter, and up 0.1 cent from the 2.9 cents recorded in the third quarter of 2005.

The annual rate of after-tax profits on stockholders' equity in the third quarter of 2006 was 15.0 percent, up 0.5 percent ($\pm 0.1\%$) from the 14.6 percent of the second quarter of 2006, and up 0.5 percent ($\pm 0.1\%$) from the 14.5 percent of the third quarter of 2005.

NOTE

These data are based on quarterly financial reports obtained from approximately 500 corporations. More detailed information on the retail trade sector for the third quarter 2006 will be published in the Quarterly Financial Report for Manufacturing, Mining, and Trade Corporations - Fourth Quarter 2006 (QFR-06-4), scheduled for release on April 3, 2007.

SAMPLING

The data presented in this report are estimated from a sample survey and therefore are subject to sampling variability as well as nonsampling variability such as response error, nonreporting, and coverage errors. Estimates of sampling variability are presented in the publication. A statement such as "up 2.5 (± 0.2) cents", appearing in the text, indicates the range (+2.3 to +2.7 cents) in which the actual change is likely to have occurred. The range given for the change is a 90% confidence interval that accounts only for sampling variability. If the range had contained zero (0), it would have been uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease; that is, the change would not have been statistically significant. For any comparison cited without a confidence interval, the change is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level. The quarterly publication includes more detailed explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability, along with additional measures of sampling variability.

Beginning with the 3Q2006 publication, the methodology for calculating the sample variance has changed. See the Survey Methodology section of the Introduction text in the publication release for information on this change in methodology for calculating the sample variance.

DATA AVAILABILITY

This press release can be viewed today in page image format (.pdf) at the internet website <http://www.census.gov/csd/qfr>. More detailed information on U.S. Manufacturing, Mining, and Wholesale and Retail Trade Corporations is available for downloading at our website under "QFR Products: Publication". The publication includes statements of income and retained earnings, balance sheets, and related financial and operating ratios. Data presented are classified by industry and asset size.

Fourth quarter 2006 advance data for U.S. Manufacturing, Mining, Wholesale and Retail Trade Corporations are scheduled for release on April 3, 2007.

Table 1. Income Statement For U.S. Retail Trade Corporations - Assets \$50 Million And Over

Item	3Q 2006	2Q 2006 ¹	3Q 2005 ¹
	(million dollars)		
Net sales, receipts, and operating revenues	484,119	482,649	446,121
Less: Depreciation, depletion, and amortization.....	8,954	8,911	8,355
Less: All other operating costs and expenses	452,545	450,661	418,618
Income (or loss) from operations	22,620	23,077	19,147
Interest expense.....	3,561	3,483	3,101
Net nonoperating income (expense).....	2,970	2,022	3,112
Income (or loss) before income taxes	22,029	21,616	19,158
Less: Provision for current and deferred domestic income taxes.....	7,593	7,832	6,351
Income (or loss) after income taxes	14,436	13,783	12,807
Cash dividends charged to retained earnings in current quarter.....	2,457	3,211	2,328
Net income retained in business	11,978	10,572	10,480
Retained earnings at beginning of quarter	275,777	265,522	240,846
Other direct credits (or charges) to retained earnings (net).....	(2,652)	(2,996)	(7,635)
Retained earnings at end of quarter	285,104	273,098	243,691

Table 2. Income Statement Ratios For U.S. Retail Trade Corporations - Assets \$50 Million And Over

Item	3Q 2006	2Q 2006 ¹	3Q 2005 ¹
	(cents)		
Net sales, receipts, and operating revenues	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less: Depreciation, depletion, and amortization.....	1.9	1.9	1.9
Less: All other operating costs and expenses	93.5	93.4	93.8
Income (or loss) from operations	4.7	4.8	4.3
Interest expense.....	0.7	0.7	0.7
Net nonoperating income (expense).....	0.6	0.4	0.7
Income (or loss) before income taxes	4.6	4.5	4.3
Less: Provision for current and deferred domestic income taxes.....	1.6	1.6	1.4
Income (or loss) after income taxes	3.0	2.9	2.9

Table 3. Operating Ratios For U.S. Retail Trade Corporations - Assets \$50 Million And Over

Item	3Q 2006	2Q 2006 ¹	3Q 2005 ¹
	(percent)		
Annual rate of profit on stockholders' equity at end of period:			
Before income taxes	22.92	22.84	21.72
After income taxes	15.02	14.56	14.52
Annual rate of profit on total assets:			
Before income taxes	9.67	9.70	9.09
After income taxes	6.34	6.19	6.07

¹Revised.